

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MANILA 09268 160917Z

ACTION EB-07

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FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1177

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 9268

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAIR, RP

SUBJECT: AIRCRAFT CLEARANCE

REF: A. STATE 129041

B. MANILA 9175

1. STIFFER AIRCRAFT CLEARANCE REQUIREMENTS IMPOSED IN PAST MONTHS BY GOP DATE FROM U.S. DEPARTURE FROM SOUTH VIETNAM. GOP WAS SHOCKED AT THAT BY MULTITUDES OF U.S. PLANES ARRIVING IN RP FOR EMERGENCY LANDINGS WITHOUT CLEARANCE OR APPARENT CONCERN FOR PHILIPPINE SOVREIGNTY OVER THAT AIR-SPACE. IN ADDITION, LATE LAST YEAR, GOP REGISTRATION AND CONTROL OF GENERAL AVIATION AIRCRAFT CAME UNDER CLOSE SCRUTINY BY THE PALACE AND THE 1ST AIR DIVISION OF THE PHILIPPINE AIR FORCE, WHICH HAS PRESIDENTIAL MANDATE TO MONITOR AND PROTECT PHILIPPINE AIR SPACE. CONCERN ABOUT SMALL CRAFT PROBABLY STEMS, INTER ALIA FROM PREOCCUPATION WITH PRESIDENT'S SECURITY. IT IS A FACT THAT REGISTRATION AND FLIGHT CONTROL OF SMALL AIRCRAFT IN THE PHILIPPINES HAS BEEN NOTABLY LAX.

2. IN A RELATED AREA, GOP HAS REFUSED PERMISSION CLARK AIR BASE AND CUBI NAVAL AIR STATION AERO CLUBS TO FLY INTO PHILIPPINE AIR SPACE WITHOUT DIPLOMATIC CLEARANCE.
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PAGE 02 MANILA 09268 160917Z

PHILIPPINE 1ST AIR DIVISION HAS ALSO ASKED EMBASSY MANILA TO OBTAIN DIPLOMATIC CLEARANCE FOR U.S. FAA CALIBRATION FLIGHTS OUT OF YOKOTA, JAPAN, RATHER THAN REQUESTING CLEARANCE BY LETTER DIRECTLY FROM THE PHILIPPINE AIR FORCE (REF. B).

3. EMBASSY WISHES TO POINT OUT THAT WE HAVE HAD NO

PARTICULAR PROBLEMS WITH GENERAL AVIATION AIRCRAFT CLEARANCES FOR A NUMBER OF MONTHS, ALTHOUGH GOP REGULATIONS CERTAINLY APPEAR TO BE MORE RESTRICTIVE AND BURDENSOME THAN THOSE OF SURROUNDING COUNTRIES, EXCEPTING PERHAPS INDONESIA. PURSUANT TO REF. A, EMBOFF HAS DISCUSSED RELAXING OF CLEARANCE PROCEDURES WITH DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (DFA) AND COLONEL IN CHARGE OF CLEARANCES FOR 1ST AIR DIVISION. EMBASSY DOES NOT BELIEVE REPRESENTATIONS ON THIS ISSUE ARE LIKELY TO BE FRUITFUL. NEVERTHELESS, ON OUTSIDE CHANCE OF FAVORABLE RESPONSE, AND AS PART OF PROCESS OF PERSUADING GOP TO BRING THEIR CLEARANCE PROCEDURES IN LINE WITH ICAO AND NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES, WE ARE WILLING SEND NOTE THIS SUBJECT TO DFA AND TO MAKE ADDITIONAL, MORE FORMAL, PERSONAL REPRESENTATIONS.

4. AS BACKGROUND FOR THESE REPRESENTATIONS, EMBASSY REQUESTS THAT WASHINGTON AGENCIES (1) CONFIRM OUR IMPRESSION, GAINED FROM PERUSAL OF FAA INTERNATIONAL FLIGHT INFORMATION MANUAL, THAT GOP CLEARANCE REQUIREMENTS ARE CONSIDERABLY TOUGHER THAN THOSE OF THE PHILIPPINES' NON-COMMUNIST NEIGHBORS (WITH THE EXCEPTION OF INDONESIA) AND (2) FURNISH EMBASSY WITH DETAILS OF COMPLAINTS (MENTIONED REF. A) OF U.S. GENERAL AVIATION AIRCRAFT REGARDING CLERANCE PROCEDURES (E.G. DATES, NATURE OF INCIDENTS, ETC.) NAMES OF COMPANIES AND PILOTS INVOLVED WILL NOT BE NECESSARY.
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